

## Guide for the Oral Portion of Laboratory Work

*Acknowledge that there is no strict regimen to follow when writing a research paper, but the information below details one recommended format that may be used.*

*This lab manual is adapted from the General Ecology Laboratory Manual for PCB 4043 prepared by Schuur et al. (2011), STEM Research Handbook by Darci Hartland (2011), and the University of Florida's Student Science Training Program Academic Manual.*

### Overview

- This is your time to recruit support for your research. Many times, people will not even look at your written research paper, so engage your audience and make your project shine.
- You should base your presentation off of your final research paper and assure sure that the information in your oral presentation aligns with the information in the paper.

### Format

- When planning your presentation, it is beneficial to begin with your format; this will allow for a structured presentation from the start. Your format should be similar to that of a research paper but less detailed.
- The length of your presentation will vary, and usually you will be provided a time limit. If not, determine an appropriate time for your presentation—usually 5 to 8 minutes is appropriate.
- If possible, include a question and answer session. This will showcase your subject knowledge and allow for clarification of any parts of the presentation.

### Preparation

- Use your research paper—if you have one—to guide your presentation. This will assure that you include the essential information.
- Construct an outline including what you will include in your presentation. Organize your points logically, making sure your audience is able to keep track.
- You may use index cards or a piece of paper as guidance during your presentation, but try to avoid using this. It is more impressive if you are able to present your research without these crutches.
- Always practice in front of a mirror or a person who can provide feedback beforehand. Do not present impromptu.

### Visual Portion

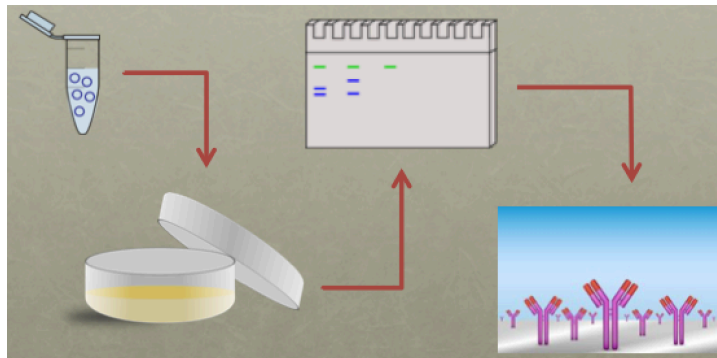
- A visual tool is not required but can many times assist in the transmission of information to the audience.
- If you do incorporate a visual presentation, be careful—it is VISUAL. Avoid loading your presentation with words; very few people will read the screen/board if there is too much information. Instead, use pictures, diagrams, graphs, flow charts, etc. This will help engage your audience. Also, do NOT use your visual as a crutch—reading off your slides and searching for things on the graphs will be a distraction and seem unprofessional. You are speaking to an audience, not your screen.

# You Research

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You will impress your audience if you rarely look at your PowerPoint or board/poster. Furthermore, know the architecture of your visual portion! If you experience technical difficulties, this will be extremely helpful.

- Ex. When detailing your procedures, include a diagram like this instead of paragraphs of information. Your audience will be impressed and able to follow your project with ease.



## Voice & Appearance

- Adjust your volume to the size of the room, making sure to always speak loudly and clearly. Do not speak so quickly that your words are incomprehensible.
- If you are mentioning a key point, emphasize it. You control your voice, so use it as an added bonus to your presentation.
- Once again, practicing your presentation before will help with the final execution of the presentation. Also, make sure you can pronounce those complex, scientific terms!
- Always avoid fillers like “umm,” “like,” “so,” etc. These detract from your presentation and make it seem as if you do not know the content. When practicing, ask someone to count how many times you use fillers—this can be very useful.
- Make eye contact as if you are having a one-on-one conversation! It tells your audience that you are confident and makes them more likely to pay attention.
- Avoid fixing your hair, twiddling your thumbs, or other distracting behaviors.
- Stand in the middle of the stage/platform, not behind a podium or in a far corner.
- If you walk some while presenting, make sure not to turn your back to the audience!

You may also use this rubric to understand the important aspects of an oral presentation:

Category	Scoring Criteria	Total Points	Score
<b>Organization</b> (15 points)	The type of presentation is appropriate for the topic and audience.	5	
	Information is presented in a logical sequence.	5	
	Presentation appropriately cites requisite number of references.	5	
<b>Content</b> (45 points)	Introduction is attention-getting, lays out the problem well, and establishes a framework for the rest of the presentation.	5	
	Technical terms are well-defined in language appropriate for the target audience.	5	
	Presentation contains accurate information.	10	
	Material included is relevant to the overall message/purpose.	10	
	Appropriate amount of material is prepared, and points made reflect well their relative importance.	10	
	There is an obvious conclusion summarizing the presentation.	5	
<b>Presentation</b> (40 points)	Speaker maintains good eye contact with the audience and is appropriately animated (e.g., gestures, moving around, etc.).	5	
	Speaker uses a clear, audible voice.	5	
	Delivery is poised, controlled, and smooth.	5	
	Good language skills and pronunciation are used.	5	
	Visual aids are well prepared, informative, effective, and not distracting.	5	
	Length of presentation is within the assigned time limits.	5	
	Information was well communicated.	10	
<b>Score</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>	